

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6044

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 3 MANAGUA 1269

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGEN, NU, SHUM

SUBJECT: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES IN NICARAGUA

REFS: A) STATE 34007, B) STATE 38369, C) STATE 291277, D) STATE 58395

1. (I) OVERVIEW: NICARAGUA IS AT A POINT IN ITS MODERN POLITICAL HISTORY WHICH CAN LEAD EITHER TOWARD CIVIL WAR, GREATER RESTRICTION OF FREEDOMS UNDER THE CURRENT OR A SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT (MILITARY OR REVOLUTIONARY) OR TOWARD GREATER DEMOCRATIZATION LIKEWISE UNDER EITHER THE CURRENT OR A DEMOCRATICALLY-INSTALLED SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT THERE COULD BE A STANDOFF, BUT AT THIS TIME, THERE APPEARS TO BE TOO MUCH MOMENTUM BEHIND THE ANTI-SOMOZA FORCES FOR THIS

TO BE A LIKELY OUTCOME. IN THE CURRENT HIGHLY POLARIZED POLITICAL CLIMATE THE FIRST PRIORITY FOR MOST NICARAGUANS IS THE ISSUE OF WHO IS IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT (SOMOZA OR SOMEONE ELSE). ONLY SECONDARY ATTENTION IS BEING GIVEN TO WHICH PATH IS CHOSEN. THE UNITED STATES IS BACK-SEAT DRIVING BUT NICARAGUANS ON BOTH SIDES ARE INCREASINGLY

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TELLING US THAT UNLESS WE ARE WILLING TO SIDE WITH THEM, THAT WE SHOULD KEEP QUIET.

2. (II) KEY POLICY ISSUES: THE FUNDAMENTAL POLICY ISSUE IS HOW, SHORT OF DIRECT US INVOLVEMENT, TO ENCOURAGE THE OPPOSITION AND GON TO PURSUE A PATH TOWARD PEACEFUL DEMOCRATIC CHANGE AND, THEREBY ADVANCE U.S. NATIONAL INTERESTS, THE U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY AND AVOID PO-

TENTIAL JEOPARDY TO OUR HEMISPHERIC POLICY AND CENTRAL AMERICAN COOPERATIVE RELATIONS. THIS ISSUE IS ADDRESSED IN STATE 58395 WHICH INSTRUCTS THE EMBASSY TO MAINTAIN A POLICY OF STRICT NEUTRALITY WHILE ENCOURAGING AVOIDANCE OF VIOLENCE AND REESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE RIVAL FORCES. THE EMBASSY WAS FURTHER INSTRUCTED TO AVOID ACTING AS A MATCHMAKER OR GUARANTOR FOR ANY AGREEMENTS. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS POLICY APPROACH TURNS ON WHETHER SOMOZA IS PREPARED TO GO FAR ENOUGH IN ACCEPTING SIGNIFICANT REFORMS TO MAKE THE OPPOSITION WILLING TO ACCEPT A MODUS VIVENDI, AND WHETHER THE OPPOSITION WILL ACCEPT ANY MODUS VIVENDI WORKED OUT WITH SOMOZA WITHOUT SOME U.S. GUARANTEE.

3. THE QUESTION IS WHAT LEVERAGE THE U.S. CAN EXERCISE TO MOVE THE CONTENDING FORCES IN THE DIRECTION WE BELIEVE TO BE NECESSARY. AT THE PRESENT TIME THE MILITARY ASSISTANCE RELATIONSHIP IS EFFECTIVELY REDUCED TO SOLELY MILITARY TRAINING AND THE GON IS TURNING TO OTHER MILITARY EQUIPMENT SUPPLIERS. ALL NEW AID LOANS OR GRANTS TO THE GON ARE IN SUSPENSE. THE LEVERAGE WITH THE GON WHICH REMAINS IS CONTINUED MILITARY TRAINING, THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF US MILITARY REPRESENTATIVES, I.F.I. LAONS, THE AID RECONSTRUCTION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT PIPELINES AND OUR SYMBOLIC PRESENCE. ON THE OTHER HAND THERE ARE NUMEROUS ITEMS ON THE GON SHOPPING LIST WHICH COULD BE USED TO INDUCE SPECIFIC MOVES IF THE CIRCUMSTANCES WARRANTED SUCH ACTION. THE OPPOSITION GROUPS, POLITICAL AND PRIVATE, ARE INTERESTED IN, AT THE LEAST, U.S. SYMPATHY FOR THEIR EFFORTS TO BREAK SOMOZA'S CONTROL. THEY WOULD ALSO, FOR THE MOST PART, FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE
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ABOUT ENTERING COMMUNICATIONS WITH SOMOZA IF THEY WERE BEING LED BY THE U.S. OR WERE ABLE TO POINT TO THE U.S. AS GUARANTORS OF SOMOZA'S RELINQUISHMENT OF POWER.

4. UNDER THE PRESENT INSTRUCTIONS, THE PRINCIPAL RECOURSE OF THE U.S. IS MORAL SUASION. THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT LEVERAGE IN THE PAST TO MOVE BOTH SIDES TOWARD ACCOMMODATION SIMPLY BECAUSE OF THE HISTORIC POLITICAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC ORIENTATION TOWARD THE U.S. OF NICARAGUA'S NON-RADICAL LEADERS. THE PRESENT SITUATION, HOWEVER, IS ABNORMAL IN THAT THE HEIGHTENED POLIARIZATION HAS LED BOTH SIDES TO INTERPRET U.S. POLICY AS INSENSITIVE AND ACCORDINGLY, TO BE LESS INTERESTED IN LISTENING TO U.S. COUNSEL.

5. THE POLICY DECISION WHICH WILL LIKELY HAVE TO BE ADDRESSED IS, THEREFORE, WHETHER AND UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES THE U.S. WOULD BE PREPARED TO SHIFT AT LEAST SLIGHTLY FROM THE CURRENT RELATIVELY NEUTRAL STANCE? THERE ARE TWO POSSIBILITIES FOR IMPORTANT CHANGE IN THIS HIGHLY FLUID SITUATION: SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT OR SIGNIFICANT DETERIORATION.

6. THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL AGREEMENT ON INITIATIVES TOWARD DEMOCRATIZATION THROUGH INFORMAL OR FORMAL DIALOGUE WOULD REPRESENT

SENT SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT. IF THIS WERE TO OCCUR, APPROVAL OF THE CURRENTLY FROZEN AID LOANS WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOLLOWING CONSULTATION WITH RESPONSIBLE LOCAL AND U.S. OPPONENTS OF ANY ASSISTANCE TO THE SOMOZA REGIME. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT EVEN WITH A POLITICAL SOLUTION FOR PEACEFUL TRANSITION THE FSLN GUERRILLAS MIGHT CONTINUE OR EVEN ESCALATE THEIR ATTACKS ON THE THE GN. IF THIS WERE TO HAPPEN, A DECISION OF TOKEN SUPPORT FOR THE GN SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BUT ONLY IF IT WOULD RECEIVE OPEN SUPPORT FROM SOME SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS OF THE LOCAL OPPOSITION.

7. SIGNIFICANT DETERIORATION IN THE CURRENT SITUATION COULD RESULT FROM INCREASED FSLN ATTACKS AND TERRORISM ACCOMPANIED BY OUTBREAKS OF CIVIL DISTURABNCES. IF IT APPEARD THAT INCREASED VIOLENCE WERE LEADING NOT TOWARD SOMOZA'S DEPARTURE BUT THE BREAKDOWN OF THE
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ENTIRE FABRIC OF THE SOCIETY, THE U.S. WOULD ALSO HAVE TO RE-EXAMINE ITS CURRENT POLICY OF NEUTRALITY.

8. THE U.S. COULD RESPOND TO SUCH A SITUATION IN A UNILATERAL OR MULTILATERAL FASHION. A MULTILATERAL APPROACH COULD BE SOUGHT THROUGH THE OAS. IF THE U.S. CHOSE OR WERE FORCED TO CHOOSE TO ACT ALONE, THE OPTIONS WOULD BE TO ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN SOMOZA'S RESIGNATION AND THEN LEND SUPPORT TO A SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT OR TO LEND SUCH SUPPORT TO SOMOZA.

9. TO ATTEMPT TO FORCE A RESIGNATION, THE U.S. COULD RESORT TO PRIVATE URGING, PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND SYMBOLIC ACTIONS SUCH AS WITHDRAWAL OF MISSION ELEMENTS. IF SOMOZA RESISTED THE PRESSURE, WE MIGHT THEN HAVE TO WITHDRAW TO A BARE-BONES STAFF AND WOULD HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED FURTHER DIRECT INFLUENCE. IF SOMOZA WERE TO RESIGN WE COULD LEND IMMEDIATE SUPPORT TO AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT THROUGH PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS SUCH AS AID LOANS OR RENEWED MILITARY ASSISTANCE.

10. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES THE ADVANTAGES OF BOLSTERING SOMOZA RATHER THAN TRYING TO FORCE HIS RESIGNATION WOULD BE THAT IT WOULD AVOID THE PROBLEMS WHICH COULD ENSUE IF HE REFUSED TO GO, AND IT MIGHT RAPIDLY STABILIZE IN THE SHORT RUN A DETERIORATING SUTATION. HOWEVER, THE COST WOULD BE SO GREAT IN LOCAL, U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL REPUDIATION AS A RESULT OF BEING CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH SOMOZA THAT IT WOULD BE PROHIBITIVELY COSTLY. THE ADVANTAGE OF ATTEMPTING TO OBTAIN HIS RESIGNATION, EVEN IF IT FAILED AN A REVOLUTION SUCCEEDED, WOULD BE THAT THE U.S. WOULD BE SEEN BY THE SAME PERSONS WHO WOULD DECRY SUPPORT FOR SOMOZA AS HAVING MADE A CORRECT MOVE EVEN IF IT WERE TOO LATE TO AVOID A FAILURE OF US POLICY.

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

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INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

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11. SECONDARY POLICY ISSUES WHICH ARE RAISED FURTHER IN THIS EVALUATION ARE: A) HOW SHOULD THE U.S. RESPOND IF THE CONTENDING POLITICAL FORCES SHOULD AGREE THAT AN OUTSIDE OBSERVER FORCE IS NECESSARY TO ESTABLISH FAITH IN FREE ELECTIONS? B) TO WHAT EXTENT SHOULD THE U.S. RESPONSE TO DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF THE POOREST SECTORS BE BASED ON THE OBJECTIVE OF INCREASING THE GON FOCUS ON ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES TO THE POOREST?

12. (III) COURSES OF ACTION: THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ARE DIRECTED TO EACH OF THE U.S.OBJECTIVES EMBODIED IN STATE 38369.

13. A) MAINTENANCE OF COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP: THE GREATER THE POLARIZATION IN NICARAGUA, THE GREATER BOTH CONTENDING FORCES PULL AWAY FROM A NEUTRAL U.S. CONCURRENTLY, THE TENDENCY INCREASES TO VIEW ANYONE WHO IS NOT A PART OF THE SOLUTION AS PART OF THE PROBLEM. THIS CREATES THE GROWING PROBLEM OF THE U.S. INCREASINGLY BEING SEEN AS EITHER IRRELEVANT OR AN ENEMY, AND THIS MAKES CONSTRUCTIVE CONTACTS WITH BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION MORE DIFFICULT. ATTEMPTS TO CULTIVATE FUTURE POLITICAL LEADERS AND STRENGTHEN

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CULTURAL TIES WILL BE LESS SUCCESSFUL. HOWEVER, WE WOULD EXPECT THE GON TO CONTINUE TO IDENTIFY LARGELY WITH U.S. POSITIONS IN INTERNATIONAL FORA BASED ON NATIONAL INTEREST CONSIDERATIONS.

14. THE ONLY COURSE OF ACTION WHICH WILL ADVANCE THIS OBJECTIVE IS TO ATTEMPT TO LESSEN THE POLARIZATION BY PROMOTING CONSTRUCTIVE CHANGE EITHER THROUGH UNILATERAL ACTION BY THE GON OR, PREFEREABLY, THROUGH DIALOGUE. THE SUCCESS OF THIS COURSE OF ACTION DEPENDS UPON THE U.S. CONTINUING TO ACT AS A MODERATE CATALYST FOR PEACEFUL AND DEMOCRATIC CHANGE, EVEN IF THIS MEANS INCREASED ALIENATION FROM BOTH SIDES UNTIL THEY BEGIN TO COME TOGETHER AGAIN. IF THE U.S. WERE TO MOVE SIGNIFICANTLY TOWARD ONE SIDE IT COULD WEAKEN U.S. INFLUENCE WITH THE OTHER SIDE IN THE CURRENT SITUATION.

15. IT SHOULD ALSO BE NOTED THAT BECAUSE OF PAST U.S. POLICY IN NICARAGUA BOTH SIDES IN THE CURRENT POLITICAL CONFRONTATION HAVE SOME RESIDUAL BELIEF AS WELL AS DESIRE THAT, BEFORE ALLOWING THE CURRENT POLITICAL STRIFE TO SIGNIFICANTLY ESCALATE, THE U.S. WILL INTERCEDE AND RESTORE PEACE. BOTH SIDES LIKELY BELIEVE SUCH INTERVENTION WOULD FAVOR THEIR INTERESTS. SUCH AN ATTITUDE TO THE EXTENT IT EXISTS, BREEDS POLITICAL IRRESPONSIBILITY. THE MORE ACTIVE THE U.S. IS IN TRYING TO PROMOTE A PACIFIC SOLUTION, THE MORE THE RIVAL FORCES WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO THINK THE U.S. WILL NOT REMAIN NEUTRAL IN A CRISIS. THEREFORE, THE U.S. MUST COMMUNICATE ITS RESOLVE NOT TO INTERVENE WITHOUT APPEARING TO PROTEST TOO MUCH, AND AT THE SAME TIME KEEP ITS PROFILE AS A CATALYST FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION THROUGH DIALOGUE AS LOW AS POSSIBLE.

16. B) PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRATIC VALUES: THE PROMOTION OF OUR HUMAN RIGHTS OBJECTIVES IN NICARAGUA DEPENDS ALMOST ENTIRELY ON OUR ABILITY TO MOVE THE GON AND ITS OPPOSITION TOWARD A MORE PEACEFUL MODUS VIVENDI. SUCH A MODUS VIVENDI CAN ONLY BE PREDICTED ON THE BELIEF THAT DEMOCRATIC CHANGE IS POSSIBLE. BECAUSE OF PAST
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ELECTORAL MANIPULATION, AND THE DISCREDIT WITH WHICH ESTABLISHED POLITICIANS ARE VIEWED, THE OPPOSITION IN THE PAST HAS AND STILL BELIEVES THAT HONEST AND OPEN ELECTIONS WILL NOT OCCUR (IF SOMOZA IS STILL IN CONTROL) UNLESS THERE IS AN OUTSIDE OBSERVER PRESENCE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AND FOR THE DURATION OF THE LENGTHY VOTE TABULATION PROCESS. HOWEVER, THEY ARE ALSO CONSIDERING VARIOUS IDEAS SUCH AS HOW AN ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL COULD BE STRUCTURED TO PROTECT IT FROM ONE-SIDED MANIPULATION. IT SHOULD ALSO BE NOTED THAT MANY NICARAGUAN POLITICAL OBSERVERS DOUBT THE CAPACITY OF THE LARGE NUMBER OF ILLITERATES IN THE COUNTRY TO VOTE INTELLIGENTLY, ESPECIALLY IF THERE ARE A NUMBER OF NEW, NON-TRADITIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES TO CHOOSE AMONG.

17. THE U.S. CAN EFFECTIVELY CONTINUE TO PUBLICIZE OUR GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY THROUGH USIS, BUT IN EXPRESSING OUR CONCERN ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN NICARAGUA IT IS NECESSARY TO ACT CAUTIOUSLY BECAUSE THE CURRENT POLARIZATION LEADS TO DISTORTED CLAIMS OF VIOLATIONS. TO THE EXTENT THAT GOVERNMENT CIVILIANS AND MILITARY PER-

CEIVE THE U.S. AS READY TO SUPPORT ANY ALLEGATIONS AGAINST THE GOVERN

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MENT THEY ARE LESS LIKELY TO BE SENSITIVE TO OUR EXPRESSIONS OF
CONCERN. ON THE OTHER HAND, PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF SATISFACTION WITH
IMPROVEMENTS IN THE GON'S HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES INFURIATE THE
OPPOSITION AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO AS LONG AS GN MILITARY FORCE
IS THREATENED OR USED TO QUELL ANTI-SOMOZA DEMONSTRATIONS. IN THIS
SITUATION THE U.S. IS IN A DELICATE SITUATION. THE CHOICES ARE TO
REDUCE U.S. PUBLIC COMMENTARY ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION OR TO
MAINTAIN OUR ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT IN PROMOTING GREATER RESPECT FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS REGARDLESS OF THE CRITICISM. IF THE LATTER OPTION
IS FOLLOWED, ANY U.S. COMMENTARY SHOULD BE DOCUMENTED WITH AS MUCH
OBJECTIVE EVIDENCE AS POSSIBLE.

18. IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THE GON WILL ACCEPT ANY OUTSIDE INVESTIGATION
OF HUMAN RIGHTS UNDER THE CURRENT POLARIZED CONDITIONS. THIS IS IN
PART DUE TO THE FACT SOME EXCESSES WOULD BE FOUND AND BECAUSE SUCH
FINDING COULD LEAD AN INVESTIGATORY GROUP TO UNCRITICALLY ACCEPT
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OTHER UNFOUNDED ALLEGATIONS.

19. INITIATIVES ARE ALREADY UNDER WAY REGARDING FREE TRADE UNION
ASSOCIATION AND ADHERENCE TO THE AMERICAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS.
THE EMBASSY WILL BE FOLLOWING AND SUPPORTING THESE OBJECTIVES AS
APPROPRIATE.

20. (C) U.S. SECURITY INTERESTS: PROMOTION OF U.S. SECURITY INTER-
ESTS IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF PROMOTION OF OTHER U.S. INTERESTS AND
IS SUBJECT TO THE SAME CONSTRAINTS RESULTING FROM POLARIZED ATTITUDES.
IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR THE U.S. TO REMAIN SENSITIVE TO THE
PERCEPTIONS OF NICARAGUA'S CENTRAL AMERICAN NEIGHBORS DURING THIS
PERIOD OF POLITICAL CRISIS. NICARAGUA IS A MEMBER OF CONDECA, A
CENTRAL AMERICAN DEFENSE COUNCIL BASED ON THE RIO TREATY. THE
POSSIBILITY OF THE GON REQUESTING INVOLVEMENT OF A NEIGHBOR IN ITS
INTERNAL AFFAIRS IS REMOTE BUT SHOULD NOT BE RULED OUT.

21. THE GON CIVILIANS AND MILITARY ARE HIGHLY SENSITIVE TO OUR HUMAN
RIGHTS POLICY. THEIR COMPLAINT IS THAT THE U.S. IS BIASED AGAINST
THEM IN ITS APPLICATION OF THAT POLICY AND OVERREACTS TO UNSUB-
STANTIATED ALLEGATIONS. THE PROBLEM IS THAT THE GON HAS TO DATE
DONE VIRTUALLY NOTHING TO FACILITATE SUBSTANTIATION OF CHARGES OF
HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSE. ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE BECOME MUCH MORE AWARE OF
THE NEED TO RESPOND TO ACCUSATIONS, THE RESPONSE TO FAR HAS BEEN
LARGELY FLAT DENIAL.

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AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

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22. D) COOPEATIVE EFFORTS WITH GON TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:
THE GON HAS ENTERED A PERIOD OF MAJOR ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS. THIS
SITUATION IS DUE NOT ONLY TO PAST GON BORROWING AND THE POLITICAL
TURMOIL, BUT ALSO TO POLICY DECISIONS OF THE U.S. THE U.S. IS LIKELY
TO BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN THE GON FOCUS ON INCREASED ALLOCATION OF RE-
SOURCES TO THE POOREST SECTORS THROUGH CURRENT AID AND PEACE CORPS
PROGRAMS, BUT WITHOUT FURTHER ALLOCATION OF U.S. RESOURCES THIS
FOCUS IS LIKELY TO BLUR. PRSIDENT SOMOZA HAS ANNOUNCED INITIAVES
WHICH, IF IMPLEMENTED, WILL CONTRIBUTE TO INCREASED ALLOCATION OF
RESOURCES TO THE POOR, BUT IT IS HARD TO SEE WHERE THESE RE-
SOURCES WILL COME FROM IF THERE IS NOT SOME SIGNIFICANT
PARTICIPATION FROM THE U.S. OR FROM IFIS. HOWEVER, ANY FURTHER ALLO-
CATION OF FUNDS FROM EITHER THE U.S. OR IFI'S WILL BE INTERPRETED
IN THE POLARIZED CLIMATE AS SUPPORTIVE OF SOMOZA AS LONG AS THEY ARE
CHANNELED THROUGH THE GON, EVEN THROUGH THE POOR ARE THE INTENDED
BENEFICIARIES. THE ISSUE THEN BECOMES TO WHAT EXTENT TO DISREGARD
THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF FURTHER LOANS OR GRANTS AS LONG AS
THE POOREST SECTORS WILL CLEARLY BENEFIT, OR TO WHAT EXTENT TO CON-
TINUE TO CNDITION SUCH U.S. ECONOMIC COMMITMENTS ON THE POLITICAL
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SITUATION.

23. E) PROMOTION OF U.S. TRADE AND INVESTMENT: THE CURRENT ECONOMIC
DIFFICULTIES OF THE GON IMPLY A DETERIORATING TRADE CLIMATE.

THE POLITICAL INSTABILITY IMPLIES A DETERIORATING INVESTMENT CLIMATE. NEVERTHELESS, THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES, THE GON WILL LIKELY BE VERY FAVORABLE, AND THE PROBLEM OF NON-COMPETITIVE CONTRACT AWARDS MAY HAVE BEEN LARGELY ADDRESSED BY MINISTERIAL CHANGES LAST DECEMBER. THESE ARE SITUATIONS WHICH THE EMBASSY WILL BE MONITORING CLOSELY IN ORDER TO GIVE THE BEST POSSIBLE ADVICE TO U.S. TRADERS AND INVESTORS.

24. F) UNILATERAL COOPERATION: THE GON AT PRESENT DOES HAVE A PRAGMATIC POSITION IN THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE.

25. (IV) CURRENT SITUATION: THE CURRENT POLITICAL POLARIZATION IS THE RESULT OF MANY FACTORS. PROBABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT IS THAT MANY PEOPLE HAVE BECOME CONVINCED THAT CONTINUATION OF THE OVER FORTY-YEAR CONTROL OF THE SOMOZAS IS NOT IN THE COUNTRY'S INTEREST. "TACHO" SOMOZA GAVE A LARGE IMPULSE TO THIS FEELING BECAUSE OF HIS CONFRONTATION WITH, RATHER THAN ACCOMMODATION OF NEW POLITICAL PRESSURES. UNEQUAL COMPETITION AS A RESULT OF SOMOZA'S EXPANDING PERSONAL BUSINESS PENETRATION OF THE ECONOMY AND INCREASED CORRUPTION DURING THE NEARLY THREE YEARS OF MARTIAL LAW POLITICIZED THE PRIVATE SECTOR. THE U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY, THE FACT THAT SIGNIFICANT HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES WERE OCCURRING, AND THE ACTIVE INTERVENTION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN CRITICISM OF THE GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTED TO AN ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH NICARAGUANS BECAME CONVINCED A SHOWDOWN WITH THE GON WAS POSSIBLE. SOMOZA'S HEART ATTACK AND THE LIFTING OF MARTIAL LAW AND NEW GUERRILLA ATTACKS LED THE OPPOSITION TO CONCLUDE THAT THE TIMING FOR THEIR CHALLENGE WAS PROPITIOUS. THE CHAMORRO ASSASSINATION UNLEASHED AN EMOTIONAL CONVULSION WHICH AFFECTED VIRTUALLY THE WHOLE SOCIETY AND PROVIDED A BANNER FOR MORE MASSIVE
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ANTI-SOMOZA POLITICAL ACTIVISM THAN ANYONE HAD IMAGINED POSSIBLE. THE FACT THAT SOMOZA RESISTED THE PRESSURE OF THE NATIONAL WORK STOPPAGE, PRESSURE WHICH PROBABLY CANNOT BE DUPLICATED, AND IS NOW BELATEDLY TAKING AN ACCOMMODATING STANCE IN RESPONSE TO U.S. AND OTHER PRESSURES IS EXTREMELY DISILLUSIONING TO THE BROAD BASE PRIVATE SECTOR AND POLITICAL OPPOSITION WHICH SAW THE NATIONAL WORK STOPPAGE MOVEMENT AS A "NOW OR NEVER" OPPORTUNITY TO OUSE SOMOZA. PART OF THE FRUSTRATION IS TURNED AGAINST THE U.S. FOR ITS APPARENT "NON-INVOLVEMENT." THE FRUSTRATION HAS ALSO RESULTED IN A SPREADING BELIEF THAT THE FSLN IS THE ONLY ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM OF SOMOZA. THE OPPOSITION LEADERS, NERVOUS ABOUT THE FSLN'S GREATER POPULARITY ARE NOW STUDYING THE POSSIBILITY OF TESTING SOMOZA'S APPARENT WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT ACCOMMODATION. IF A DIALOGUE CAN BE ESTABLISHED THE POLARIZATION MAY BE REDUCED. THE KEY TO THE POLITICAL FUTURE AT PRESENT IS IN THE HANDS OF SOMOZA. IF HE DOES NOT ACCOMMODATE LEGITIMATE OPPOSITION DEMANDS FOR PREPARING THE COUNTRY FOR THE END OF THE SOMOZA DYNASTY, THE FSLN MAY BECOME AN INCREASINGLY POLITICAL ACTOR.
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Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
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To: STATE
Type: TE
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